

Green Lodging News

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Recycling Programs Revisited

For the most part, recycling has become common-place in green lodging strategy. Everyone knows the basics of recycling glass, plastics, and cardboard. However, there does still exist many important questions about recycling.

One of these questions is what can be done with some of the lesser known recyclables, especially if your current municipal handler doesn't accept them. For example, it is important to recycle items such as burned out fluorescent lamps (tubes, CFL's, etc) and electronic waste (computers, monitors tvs, etc.). However, not all haulers & processors handle these recyclables.

Luckily the Department of Environmental Quality maintains the [Michigan Recycled Materials Market Directory \(RMMD\)](#). The purpose of the RMMD is to help Michigan businesses, institutions and organizations find markets for recyclable materials. The directory shows all the specific

materials accepted by various processors, collectors, and brokers throughout Michigan. There is also contact information for all of the organizations, thus allowing staff to contact several groups to find the best available solution to your particular situation. In addition to this directory the DEQ has a wide assortment of other recycling information available on the [DEQ Recycling](#) website.

Another recycling related topic that isn't completely clear involves the purchasing of goods made from recycled materials; more specifically what the difference is between all the various language used in marketing and labeling?

When attempting to purchasing goods made from recycled materials, the "recycling" symbol (triangle made with three arrows) has very little meaning. All this symbol really means is that the product can be recycled. A product label must specifically say that it was made from

"recycled" materials to guarantee that this is the case. Labels also will typically say what percentage of the product is composed of recycled material (often 100% but not always, it would be incorrect to assume 100% if the product isn't labeled as such).

To make matters more confusing, not all "made from 100% recycled" labels mean the same thing. This is due to the difference between pre-consumer and post-consumer waste (often labeled as "PC" or "PCW"). Taking paper as an example, pre-consumer content is taking paper scraps left from the manufacturing process while post-consumer paper is made out of paper collected from various recycling programs. Thus, the only one of these that creates a demand for recycled paper from places such as your home or office is the post-consumer waste designation and this is why the higher the percentage of PCW used to produce the product, the better it is from an environmental standpoint.

Spotlight—Crystal Mountain



Green Lodging News is a publication targeted toward Michigan's hospitality facilities. It is a service of the Energy Office, Michigan Dept. of Labor and Economic Growth. If you are interested in subscribing to the bimonthly newsletter, please contact doherty1@michigan.gov.

Crystal Mountain Resort located in the scenic northern highlands of Thompsonville, MI has been certified as a Green Lodging Michigan Steward. The resort offers great activities year round and prides itself in helping to maintain the natural beauty of northern Michigan.

Crystal Mountain has implemented many unique environmental initiatives at their facility such as using programmable thermostats, landscaping with native plants and trees, and avoiding single serve packaging for cereal, creamer, and tableware. The resort has also started work on its goal of powering the facility with 100 percent renewable energy by purchasing wind energy credits to offset the energy use of one of their chairlifts.

You can learn more about [Crystal Mountain](#) and the [Green Lodging Michigan](#) program by visiting their corresponding websites.

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